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450.01 Overview

Land use and transportation are often closely intertwined. Land use may determine the demand for transportation facilities, and transportation projects may help determine land use.

Applicable federal, state, and local land use laws, including any requirements for permits, special studies, environmental impact analyses, and review for consistency with adopted plans, policies, and regulations must be complied with before a project can go into construction.

Chapter 451 through **Chapter 459** cover a range of land use topics, listed below.

- 451 Land Use, Land Use Plans, and Growth Management
- 452 Coastal Areas and Shorelines
- 453 Wild and Scenic Rivers
- 454 Farmland and Agriculture
- 455 Public Lands (Section 4(f), and 6(f) and Forests)
- 456 Historic, Cultural, and Archaeological Resources
- 457 Social, Economic, and Relocation
- 458 Environmental Justice
- 459 Visual Impacts

While the emphasis in these chapters is on highway projects, the same or similar requirements apply to ferry, transit, rail, and aviation projects.

450.02 Overview of Environmental Requirements

(1) **National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)**

Under NEPA implementation regulations (40 CFR 1508.14), the human environment is defined as “comprehensively including the natural and physical environment and the relationship of people with that environment....” Land use is a major expression of the relationship of people with their physical environment. “When an environmental impact statement is prepared and economic or social and natural or physical environmental effects are interrelated, then the environmental impact statement will discuss all of these effects on the human environment.” Under 40 CFR 1508.8, aesthetic, historic, cultural, economic, social, and health impacts are among those to be considered. Statutory and regulatory authority is found in:

- NEPA, 42 USC 4321-4347
- CEQ regulations, 40 CFR 1500-1508

FHWA's environmental impact and related procedures are found in:

- 23 CFR 771
- FHWA Technical Advisory 6640.8A

(2) State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA)

SEPA requires analysis of a project's impact on the natural and built environment prior to permitting or construction. The built environment includes topics covered in [Chapter 451](#) through [Chapter 459](#): analysis of land and shoreline use, relationship to existing land use plans and estimated population, housing; aesthetics, light and glare, recreation, historic and cultural preservation, and agricultural crops (WAC 197-11-444).

Under SEPA the relationships between transportation projects and land and shoreline use are analyzed, including consistency with state and local plans such as the Shoreline Management Act and the local Shoreline Master Plan. WSDOT regional staff are responsible for doing the analysis and determining appropriate thresholds, standards, and significant adverse impacts. Because WSDOT is not the land use authority in most cases, regional staff must coordinate the work with the local land use authorities, or in some cases, both local and state authorities.

SEPA implementing regulations are in Chapter 197-11 WAC.

450.03 Exhibits

None.